CLAIMS:

SUB C1

1. An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence encoding or complementary to a sequence encoding a novel mammalian gene from the *bcl-2* family and comprising an amino acid sequence substantially as set forth in SEQ ID NO:7 or SEQ ID NO:9 or having 47% or greater similarity to either of SEQ ID NO:7 or SEQ ID NO:9.

2. An isolated nucleic acid molecule according to claim 1 wherein the nucleotide sequence encodes the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:7 or SEQ ID NO:9 or encodes a derivative thereof.

3. An isolated nucleic acid molecule according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the nucleic acid molecule comprises the nucleotide sequence substantially set forth in SEQ ID NO:6 or SEQ ID NO:8 or comprises a derivative of said sequence.

4. An isolated nucleic acid molecule according to claim 1 or 2 wherein said nucleic acid molecule is capable of hybridizing to the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:6 or SEQ ID NO:8 under low stringency conditions and encodes an amino acid sequence which has 47% or greater similarity to the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:7 or SEQ ID NO:9.

5. An isolated nucleic acid molecule encoding Bcl-w or a derivative thereof, said nucleic acid molecule selected from the list consisting of:

(i) a nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence encoding the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:7 or SEQ ID NO:9 or having 47% or greater similarity for SEQ ID NO:7 or SEQ ID NO:9;

(ii) a nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence substantially as set forth in SEQ ID NO:6 or SEQ ID NO:8 or comprising a nucleotide sequence encoding an amino acid sequence 47% or greater similarity to SEQ ID NO:7 or SEQ ID NO:9;

(iii) a nucleic acid molecule capable of hybridizing to the nucleotide sequence substantially set forth in SEQ ID NO:6 or SEQ ID NO:8 under low stringency conditions and encoding an amino acid sequence having 47% or greater similarity to SEQ ID NO:7 or SEQ ID NO:9;

(iv) a nucleic acid molecule capable of hybridizing to the nucleic acid of part (i) or (ii) or (iii) under low stringency conditions and encoding an amino acid sequence having 47% or greater similarity to SEQ ID NO:7 or SEQ ID NO:9; and

(v) a derivative or mammalian homologue of the nucleic acid molecule of parts (i) or (ii) or (iii) or (iv).

6. An isolated polypeptide selected from the listing consisting of:

(i) a polypeptide having an amino acid sequence substantially as set forth in SEQ ID NO:7 or SEQ ID NO:9 or a sequence having 47% or greater similarity to SEQ ID NO:7 or SEQ ID NO:9;

(ii) a polypeptide encoded by a nucleotide sequence substantially as set forth in SEQ ID NO:6 or SEQ ID NO:8 or a sequence encoding an amino acid sequence having 47% or greater similarity to SEQ ID NO:7 or SEQ ID NO:9;

(iii) a polypeptide encoded by a nucleic acid molecule capable of hybridizing to the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:6 or SEQ ID NO:8 under low stringency conditions and which encodes an amino acid sequence substantially as set forth in SEQ ID NO:7 or SEQ ID NO:9 or an amino acid sequence having 47% or greater similarity to SEQ ID NO:7 or SEQ ID NO:9;

(iv) a polypeptide as defined in part (i) or (ii) or (iii) in homodimeric form; and

(v) a polypeptide as defined in part (i) or (ii) or (iii) in heterodimeric form.

7. An isolated polypeptide according to claim 6 in multimeric form with itself or with another molecule.

8. An isolated polypeptide according to claim 7 wherein said other molecule is a

molecule capable of promoting cell survival and/or delaying cell cycle entry.

9. An isolated polypeptide according to claim 7 wherein said other molecule is a molecule capable of antagonising cell survival.

10. An isolated polypeptide according to claim 7 wherein said other molecule is a member of the Bcl-2 family.

11. A method for modulating expression of *bcl-w* or a derivative thereof in a mammal, said method comprising contacting the *bcl-w* gene with an effective amount of a modulator of *bcl-w* expression for a time and under conditions sufficient to up-regulate or down-regulate or otherwise modulate expression of *bcl-w* or its derivative.

12. A method according to claim 11 wherein the modulator is an antisense molecule to *bcl-w* or its derivative.

13. A method according to claim 11 wherein the modulator is a sense molecule regulating expression of Bcl-w or its derivative.

14. A method according to claim 11 wherein the modulator is a ribozyme capable of targeting *bcl-w* mRNA.

15. A method of modulating activity of Bcl-w or its derivative in a mammal, said method comprising administering to said mammal a modulating effective amount of a molecule for a time and under conditions sufficient to increase or decrease Bcl-w activity.

16. A method according to claim 15 wherein the molecule is an antibody to Bcl-w or its derivative.

17. A method according to claim 15 wherein the molecule is a non-membrane form of

Bcl-w or is a derivative thereof.

18. A pharmaceutical composition comprising Bcl-w or a derivative thereof or a modulator of Bcl-w activity and one or more pharmaceutically acceptable carriers and/or diluents.

19. An antibody to the polypeptide according to any one of claims 6 to 10.

20. An antibody according to claim 19 wherein said antibody is a monoclonal antibody.

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